



## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Mayor Proclaims Olympic Day and Citywide Celebration**

**Morristown, TN** – Mayor Sami Barile announced today that June 23 will be celebrated citywide as Olympic Day with a special event featuring medal-winning Olympians. The free event will begin at 5:00 p.m. with registration at Fred Miller Park in downtown Morristown. A torch walk around the park's walking trail will begin at 5:20. Demonstrations of Olympic sports will be located throughout the park, and the visiting athletes will be available for signing autographs. At 6:30 there will be a brief ceremony at the Kiwanis gazebo, with Olympian Carly Piper speaking and showing a video.

Carly Piper won her gold medal for swimming in the 2004 Olympics in Athens, Greece, along with her teammates in the 4x200 meter freestyle relay. She is being sent to Morristown by the United States Olympic Committee (USOC).

Missy Kane of Knoxville is a 1983 bronze medalist in the 1500 meter run, and currently hosts a television show, Fit and Fun with Missy Kane, on Knoxville television. She is employed by Covenant Health. She will be accompanied by her husband, Jim Bemiller, who is a volunteer pole vault coach at the University of Tennessee.

Wendy Hilliard was the first African-American to serve on the U.S. rhythmic gymnastics team. She has competed in 15 countries and has won numerous international medals. She is the founder of the Wendy Hilliard Foundation, which brings rhythmic gymnastics to inner city children. Ms. Hilliard was inducted into the U.S. Gymnastics Hall of Fame in 2008.

“We are so excited about bringing these wonderful athletes to Morristown and to stress the importance of physical activity and amateur athletics to our community,” said Mayor Barile. “Olympic Day is geared to accomplish multiple things. First, it is to raise awareness about the importance of physical activity to our health. Secondly, it will showcase our wonderful Parks and Recreation program. Finally, as a city we will be showing solidarity with the ideals of the Olympic movement.”

At the urging of Chicago Mayor Richard Daley during the U.S. Conference of Mayors in January in Washington, D.C., Mayor Barile joined with fellow mayors across the country in a collective pledge of support for hosting the Olympic Games in Chicago in 2016. Today's mayoral announcement and the community's cooperative celebration with other cities will send a clear message to the International Olympic Committee that our city and the United States of America support the Chicago 2016 bid for the Olympic Games. An announcement of the site for the 2016 Olympic Games is forthcoming in October 2009.

Olympic Day is a worldwide commemoration of Baron Pierre de Coubertin's June 23, 1894, convening of the first International Olympic Committee (IOC) meeting at the Sorbonne in Paris, and the founding of the Modern Olympic Games. National Olympic Committees (NOCs)

throughout the world will also participate in the international celebration, with each Olympic Committee sending Olympic Day greetings to participating nations.

Barile points out that the event is free and is open to the general public. She encourages everyone to attend. The event is sponsored by the Mayor's Task Force on Diversity and Morristown Parks and Recreation.